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SIXPENCE
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Notes of the Week

The hellish farce is played out. The criminals on the Bolshevik Bench have sentenced, as was inevitable, the innocent men in the dock. Guilty of spying and wrecking? These hard-working, professional engineers? Not an honest man in England would believe it, even were the forged, tainted and extorted evidence as strong in appearance as all the world has seen that it is weak.

Four of our men get off cheap and may thank their stars for it. One acquitted outright, doubtless by way of contrast and to show the Russian herd how impartial is the "justice" of their masters. Three sentenced to the one thing in the world they must most have hoped for, namely, to see the last of Soviet Russia. Let not Monkhouse, Cushny and Nordwall fear for a second that such a sentence of guilt and deportation lowers them in the eyes of their countrymen. Rather they will be welcomed as sons of England who have borne high her reputation amid a crew of foul traducers and remorseless foes.

**

Mr. Thornton's three years, Mr. MacDonald's two, may easily mean death if they are sent to a concentration camp or to do lumber work. Wretched MacDonald! For him there can be naught but pity. Unless he comes back to tell the tale, with health not too broken to tell it, no one will ever know what he suffered at the hands of his torturers. What did they to him during those twenty minutes of absence between the retraction of his avowal and his recantation of that feverish denial of guilt? Time would not admit prolonged methods of moral pressure. Nor is it likely that the victim was put to the thumbscrews or their like immediately before re-entering the court. Most

The Question

probably some drug to lower the power of will—already flickering—was forcibly injected into him, while at the same time a picture was drawn of the horrors that awaited recalcitrance.

With regard to Mr. Thornton, the singling out of him for chastisement suggests that perhaps an old spite of some high Soviet official against his family, which for three generations were among Russia's merchant princes, may not be foreign to the whole dastardly proceedings.

**

And now, what next? The immediate object of England must be to get the two imprisoned men out of the place of terror and torment. Government has acted quickly and well in issuing the Proclamation, empowered by the recent act, for prohibiting the importation of goods from Russia—amounting to 80 per cent. of the whole—save by special licence from the Board of Trade.

The mildness of the sentences passed in Moscow shows how potent on Soviet mentality has been the spectacle of England's just wrath: now is the moment to stiffen our attitude yet more.

**

It appears to be assumed too quickly, because the Soviets on the morrow of the trial paid the Vickers Company £30,000, that the question of money due from the Kremlin did not enter into the motives at work under the fabrication of this nightmare trial. Thirty thousand was not much as payment for the impression of solvency. The sum owed to British firms for work done or goods delivered is in the neighbourhood of fourteen million sterling, and to pay this, with the Five Year Plan tottering and the spectre of famine spreading over the land, may be quite another matter.

Finance and famine

Dare we hope that this sudden revelation of the truth about the Soviet tyranny—so often asserted by those who know, so consistently disbelieved by the mass of even relatively intelligent people—will result in a decision to have no more truck with enemies, as open and declared as they are unscrupulous?

* *

We fear not. The fatal error lay in this country, under Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's Labour government, renewing diplomatic relations with the Kremlin at a moment when, otherwise, the Soviet régime was sagging to its fall. The brave

Tippoo

thing would have been for Conservatives in this National government to have insisted on breaking them off. But the utmost to be expected is probably that, whether or no, and after whatever bargaining, our men are released, trade with Russia will go forward on level terms only and without the heavy present balance against us. Nor, most certainly, should diplomatic immunity be restored to any Soviet trade delegation and their quarters in future.

Then the moral will remain that if, after such an advertisement, Englishmen consent to earn their living under the OGPU, they must know that they are going to a land of worse cruelty than that ever imagined by a Tippoo Sahib.

* *

If America's lapse from the gold standard is intended as a lever by which to force this country back to it on America's terms, it is an ill-conceived attempt. However pliable Mr. Ramsay MacDonald might prove in Washington, or Mr. Baldwin in London, there are others more resolute and more firmly convinced on policy. But it is unnecessary to find such a motive for the American move. It can be explained more simply by America's own realisation of collapse. The shock of the banking mess on top of the loss of trade, unemployment and general ruin is quite enough. Other countries, including this still powerful and stable land, have accepted the "universal fit-up" with resignation. The United States, with their comparative youth and inexperience, with their inordinate self-confidence, have been knocked out by it, mentally if not materially. But they will recover. And so will the rest of us.

* *

It always seems a little ridiculous to write about the weather, except in terms of prophecy. For to curse evil weather is a stupid waste of words, and to praise fine weather a superfluous impertinence. As for the sympathy given to the farmer by town-bred journalism, that is quite simply a sham performance. All the same, the Easter of

**Easter,
1933**

1933—an Easter remarkable in its Christian significance—should not go unrecorded in any publication, lest the records of a phenomena be incomplete. Woods a mass of primroses, blue bells, Solomon's seal, anemones, wood sorrel, orchids, and early pheasant eggs, banks sweet with cowslips, trees and hedges young with true greenery, sparkle of the sea, blue of the sky like the blue of the genuine *côte d'azur*, warmth of the sun—and chill of an East wind. That was Easter, and the splendour of it outlasted the public holiday. The thrushes busy with their young and the game birds with their nests may be glad to see the human tide ebb towards its prisons. Not so the prisoners and captives, who had enchanted hours of release.

* *

Warsaw has, since our last issue, spoken some plain words on the subject of "Revision" as applied to Polish territory. The

**Polonia
dixit**

chief Polish organs of public opinion state quite simply that such revision can only be achieved by the cannon. That plain speaking is necessary, the erection of a gigantic wooden "Germania" statue on the Polish frontier, looking towards Poland and inscribed with oaths of revenge and for the recapture of Thorn, Posen, etc., shows beyond question. Germany's propaganda is so active on behalf of her nationalist drive towards the east, that few people stop to inquire on what alleged rights it is based.

If asked, the question must get a short answer: None. These lands, that were historically Polish, before Poland's partition, own an overwhelmingly Polish population, despite all the efforts of the Prussian Colonisation Commission before the war. In Poznan at the end of 1931 there were 90.5 per cent. Poles to 9.5 per cent. Germans. And the population of the much discussed Corridor itself is 89.99 per cent. Polish. Germany's yearning for Polish territory is based on nothing but an itch for grab.

* *

The nation's thanks are due to Sir Austen Chamberlain for having put the point from the

**"A long
spoon,"
said Joe**

British point of view on the motion of the adjournment for the Easter recess. His words will bear repeating, for they should be engraved on the minds of all thinking men: "What," said the former Conservative Foreign Secretary, "is this new spirit of German nationalism? The worst of the old Prussian Imperialism with an added savagery—pride and exclusiveness, no subject not of pure Nordic birth to have equality of rights and citizenship in the nation to which they belong. Are you going to discuss revision with a government like that? Are you going to discuss with them the Polish corridor? Will you dare to put another Pole under the heel of such a government? I beg the Prime Minister to beware of what he is doing."

Sir Austen may be sure that the cheers which greeted him came from the heart of all true Conservatives. The support of Major Attlee and of Colonel Wedgwood proved that they are re-echoed throughout the nation. "The revision of the treaties," said the latter, "has been killed by those speeches." As if to add emphasis to them, Germany has just adopted a new official Hymn of Hate for the coming Mayday, calling on German's to prepare for "the Holy War," and singing "To-day we will redden the iron with blood, with hangmen's blood, with Frenchmen's blood—O sweet day of vengeance!"

**Like
father,
like son**

It is an astonishing piece of impudence, in view of this, that Herr Hitler's government should dare to protest, through the German ambassador, against Sir Austen's fine outburst. The "Führer" will find him no easier to put down than Wilhelm II did his father.

Events in the Far East have been overshadowed these days by the outrages perpetrated at Moscow.

**Gateways
to
the East**

But the completion of the railway line from Kirin in Manchuria to Port Rashin in Northern Korea is of great, maybe, dominating importance, for it will enable Manchurian and Japanese interests to short-circuit the Chinese Eastern Railway and the Russian port of Vladivostok. To this is probably due the policy of pin-pricking adopted by the Soviets on that railway and their theft of large quantities of rolling-stock belonging to it—also much needed to make up the depleted stock of the Trans-Siberian. Reasons were given in a recent issue for disbelieving that, whatever notes the Kremlin may shower on Tokio and other capitals, war is likely to ensue. According to the latest indications it seems more likely that the Soviet idea is to sell out to Japan.

South of the Great Wall and nearer to Peking the interruptions to British mining and other commercial enterprise through military operations is unfortunate. All that can be said is that this is part of the price we must pay for having encouraged the militarist tendencies of chaotic Chinese governments.

Who remembers "The Shopgirl" at the Gaiety? The point—if a triumphant musical comedy must have one—was that the charming creature of its title was as good as the rest of us. Times have changed.

**The
Curzon
Breed**

Now she is better. The shopgirl has become a "saleslady." She is syndicated, affiliated, organised into a trade union. No one can be superior to her. So at least says Miss Worthing, who has upped at the annual conference of the National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants with a distinctly waxy protest against

words spoken at the trial of "the officer in the Tower."

Accused was asked about Marie Louise, his remarkable Berlin girl friend. Question: "Was she a shop assistant?" Answer: "No, she was definitely superior to that." Superior to a shop assistant? Perish the thought! This "gross insult," declared Miss Worthing, could only be washed out by "an apology from the officers in charge of the trial." What luck for the prisoner that he was not tried by a civilian court with a female juror or two! Wouldn't these "superior purzons" have had his blood, just!

What on earth is the L.C.C. about in this new nomenclature of London's streets? Earl Harold [sic], the surname of a dustman's

**Local
Busybodies**

organiser, and the name of every variety of fruit-tree are being gummed up on the side of innocent streets long known to us by old established titles. One reader tells us that he found a man busy relabelling his mews "Groom Place." He complained: his neighbours unanimously agreed: his ducal landlord struck, too. Inquiry revealed his City Council was impotent. And the name, as a crowning humiliation, was drawn from the nearest pub., the Groom and Dog!

"Bank Charges"

"Neither a borrower nor a lender be."

The adage still holds good, you must agree, For in these days of bankers' rule, my friend, You pay to borrow, and you pay to lend.

S.M.

The boom in Kaffir shares has once again directed attention to the large quantities of gold which the Empire obtains from South Africa. It is not so generally realised, however, that we also obtain most of our platinum metals from the same sources: platinum itself, iridium, osmium, palladium, etc. The production of these did not begin in the Union until 1921, when "osmiridium" (a concentrate of several minerals) was treated in the Far East Rand. Here, only about 1 oz. of this substance is found in 1,200 tons of rock, and it is merely a by-product in the winning of the gold. In the Merensky Reef, matters are different. It probably contains the world's greatest concentration of mineral wealth. On the average, about 5 dwt. of platinum are found in every ton of rock, and the metal costs about £6 per oz. to produce.

Fashion in jewellery has very much affected the selling price of the metal, since about 70 per cent. of the total production is now used for making

watches, rings, etc., while before the war very little was used for this purpose.

**

Most hibernating animals have now come out of their winter sleep. These happy beings survive their fast by accumulating a reserve of fat under their skin. But it is not so generally known that a whole group of animals have to resort to the same device to survive a summer fast, during which they cannot procure their ordinary food. Some of these "æstivating" animals may be seen at the Zoo, where the Society possesses fat sand mice and fat-tailed gerbils. As their name implies, the latter accumulate their fat in their tail. Curiously enough, they still do this after being kept in captivity for several generations.

A Fat Job

The idea of applying this general fat-storing mechanism does not seem to have struck H. G. Wells, when he described how the Men in the Moon solved their unemployment troubles by putting the unemployed to sleep until their services were once more required. But how could the unemployed get fat?

**

A recent announcement from the Cavendish Laboratory claims that positive electrons can be obtained without the use of Cosmic Rays. Neutrons (minute particles, weighing as much as hydrogen atoms and not carrying electric charges) were obtained by the bombardment of beryllium metal. These neutrons were then allowed to bombard a piece of lead. It appears that in some cases the lead nucleus was blown up by the impact of a neutron and that positive electrons were produced during the atomic explosion. This raises many important considerations. Are Cosmic rays streams of neutrons? Can protons be disintegrated by collision into neutrons and positive electrons?

The Positive Electron

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A question which often agitates householders is the comparative cost of heating their house. The following figures may therefore be of some interest: If gas is supplied by the company at sixpence per therm, and electricity at a halfpenny per unit, the "electrical" therm will cost 1s. 2d. If coke is bought at £2 per ton, the "coke therm" will cost a little over three-halfpence. In other words, even at a halfpenny a unit electric stoves still cost about nine times as much as coke. The latter fuel can easily be ignited by an auxiliary gas ring or gas poker. Of course, electric stoves and gas stoves, though much more expensive, are also much cleaner and more convenient. And very little heat "goes up the chimney." A mere comparison of crude costs does not provide a final criterion of utility.

The Criterion of Utility

A new horror has been added to Transatlantic travel by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's telephone on board the *Berengaria*. Even the chance of being reached by wireless has already taken from such a voyage much of its mysterious charm. The sense of splendid isolation is thus impaired; the very awe of Atlantic's high seas is diminished; the intrusion of friends or enemies is encouraged. But telephones! Imagine the boredom of being rung up in a cabin of the *Aquitania* by some great bore, and imagine this boredom while the *Aquitania* wrestles on uneven terms with what the log calls "high wind, heavy swell"! No more Atlantic cruises for health or pleasure. The Prime Minister has murdered sleep.

Ramsay Macbeth

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The critics seem to have been irritated by "White Lies," a comedy in three acts by Peter Garland, produced at the Embassy Theatre. Let us hope, however, that the critics are, as has happened, wrong and that play and author will confound them by a success in the centre of London. For here is a light comedy which deserves its label. The story is human and plausible, there is an unimpeachable moral, there is a happy ending and there is even a cold and distant approach to a bedroom scene; the dialogue, which has its witty lines, and the craftsmanship is competent. In fact, this is an excellent play.

An Embassy "Show"

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Much of the critical attitude has been roused by the author's use of a queer coincidence. But coincidences are a part of life and this attempt to deny to all authors any license is silly. If successful it would reduce the theatre, essentially a place of illusion, to the boresome "facts of life"—and these the commonplace facts. Anyhow, here is a deft and always amusing or interesting story of two ordinary people who try to remove the snag of habit and familiarity which comes to all married life sooner, later, or intermittently by an experiment with other partners. No harm is done, and in the last act they discover that the snag was not a real one. It is admittedly odd that they should choose the same hotel on the Riviera and that the local vicar and his trying wife should, by mistake, be given a suite which each couple had occupied in turn in this hotel. But why grumble? The coincidence, which is not essential to the play, makes for agreeable diversion and penetrating portrayal of character. "White Lies" is interesting and amusing and it is admirably played, especially by Jeanne de Casalis with a sure touch, Martin Walker (her husband) with a swift comprehension, and James Harcourt (the vicar) with a subtle sense of humour.

Why No Coincidence?

There must be many people, rather perhaps gastronomists than musicians, but professing a love of music and "knowing what they like," who will shed a tear for the threatened passing of De Groot as an active violinist. He fiddled chiefly for diners, winers, dancers and music-hall or cinema audiences, and he fiddled very well. It may be that he prostituted a great talent or that his talent was precisely what he made of it; it may be that his bow and his fingers achieved restaurant effects and that his tone was tricky. Never mind. The effects were sublime after their order, and De Groot drew honest tears and heart throbs from honest people whom he caused to listen to good music. An artist and a brave man, he should not cease playing in the silence to which the virtuosos of the dining room are condemned by the intelligentsia.

* *

State rights, not slavery, forced the Civil War on America. It will then be interesting to follow the course of that question as affecting the relations between the separate German States and the German Reich. The decree of Herr Hitler's government that henceforth the Federal States are to be ruled by Governors appointed by Berlin virtually spells the destruction of the Federal system. Have those now dispossessed of their rights the strength, and will they have the spunk, to do more than grumble? Bavaria is by far the most important of the States after the giant Prussia, whose maw has swallowed so much since Frederick the Great and now threatens to gobble up all that is left. Bavarians have many admirable qualities; and they have said loudly that they are not to be bullied. Yet it must be admitted that Bavaria has in recent history not been conspicuous for political tenacity. At the crisis of the Franco-German war her support for Prussia was bought and paid for. After the Great War she allowed herself to be docked by the Weimar Constitution of prized privileges. On the morrow of swearing that she would arrest any Nazi Stadthalter from Berlin she submitted to the full force of the Hitler régime. Will Bavaria now turn?

* *

The pictures published in the press, showing the damage caused by the recent American earthquakes, are apt to give a very false impression of their destructiveness. Evidently pictures of houses that have collapsed have greater "news value" than those of houses that have been left standing. But, usually, a very small area is affected, and then only jerry-built houses are smashed, while those soundly built of ferro-concrete are left unharmed.

De Groot and his Public

Thus, in the great earthquake of Charleston in 1886, which was felt 800 miles away, an area of 1 sq. mile was seriously damaged, and in only three cases within the last 120 years has the area of destruction exceeded 10 sq. miles. Furthermore, in the Charleston earthquake only 102 houses out of 7,000 examined were pulled down. Usually the only damage done was a crack in the ceiling.

The easiest way of evaluating the risk is to consider the insurance premiums: in the most dangerous parts of the United States, the cost to the company is about 2s. per £100 insured (although the actual premiums are about 6s.), and in the Atlantic region about 2½d. per £100.

* *

Lunch with a Bromide

"It takes all sorts to make a world", said Dr. Charles Heath as I lunched with him one day, and I have never forgotten his remark.—*Shooting Times*.

I sat at lunch the other day next someone who reminds me of Dr. Charles Heath, Anyhow I know I was absolutely fed to the teeth By a chap who made remarks very similar to that quoted at the head of these rhymes By a correspondent in the *Shooting Times*. This bright person started by trying to prove to me "how small the world was," And all because He had run across in the hotel A man he didn't really know very well Whom he happened to have seen Two or three weeks before in Aberdeen. He followed this up by telling me (and I haven't a doubt of it) That in the sea there were as good fish as ever came out of it. He assured me in the course of conversation that a thing well begun was half done, And that in his opinion two heads were often better than one. I also gathered that it was his firm belief That one of the best ways of dealing with crime was to set a thief to catch a thief, And he was equally firm In upholding the early bird's prior claim to the worm, He told me solemnly (what one with difficulty forgives) That he had come to the conclusion that one half of the world is in ignorance of how the other moiety lives, And I nearly lost control of myself I confess When he propounded the theory that nothing succeeds quite so much as success. I assure you that I wasn't even mollified when towards the end of lunch He asserted that some quip I had ventured on was "good enough for *Punch*"; And I'm sure he didn't understand when I replied, "Well, that is a coincidence! I was just wondering whether you Were good enough for the *Saturday Review*!"

W. HODGSON BURNET.

Earthquakes

New Changes in China

The Need of a New British Policy

By O. M. Green

WHILE all eyes were fastened on Manchuria, significant changes have been occurring in China. Outwardly, she is more divided than ever. Inwardly, she seems to be becoming more genuinely Chinese. The root of all recent trouble has been the tyranny of Kuomintangism, an alien invention, part American, part Russian in genesis, against which a revulsion was bound to come sooner or later. There are signs of the reaction having already begun. At the same time the best Chinese have had a thorough fright, and give some evidence, at last, of limiting their aims to their capacities.

The brief spell in office of the Cantonese, at the beginning of 1931, quickly convinced them of the futility of their loudly trumpeted policy of "drastic measures with Japan," and they faded quietly away to the South. There, as leaders of a loose confederacy of the five southern provinces, they represent a State as wholly independent of Nanking (whose wishes they consistently flout) as is Manchuria. But this is really a return to old tradition. The Cantonese have always been a race apart; there is no precedent for their controlling China, as they have been aspiring to do through the Kuomintang, whose chief champions they are; with the Southerners, as a body, shut away where they properly belong, China has a better prospect of finding some framework of government into which they may ultimately fit.

Nanking and the Yangtze

In North China, Nanking exercises nominal control in Peking, but Shansi, Shensi and Shantung are virtually independent States. A considerable faction, led by ex-Manchurian generals who want to get home, favour peace with Japan, and have already made secret overtures to Nanking to that end. Chiang Kai-shek, who always saw the folly of trying to fight Japan, undoubtedly inclines that way. He is much more interested in domestic politics than in Manchuria. One circumstance favourable to the cooling of public temper is that Geneva's final failure has shut off the fierce publicity which hitherto had made it hopeless for China and Japan to come to an arrangement in their own way.

Meanwhile, the outstanding feature in the confused picture of Chinese politics is Nanking's determination, officially proclaimed a year ago, to confine her efforts to restoring order in the Yangtze Valley, to fight no more civil wars except against Communists, and to trust to time to bring other districts into line with herself.

Within these limits she has undoubtedly done a great deal. The Communists have been harried off the river; Kuomintangism appears to have

been curbed; finances have been put under a Commission containing a large leaven of bankers and merchants; expenditure, even on the army, has been severely pruned, and, for the first time, last year's budget was balanced without borrowing. Even the students have been partly suppressed. It is very significant that Jehol gave rise to little or none of the public violence of earlier times.

To begin by creating an effective Government within a limited area, is the only practicable way in a country twenty-five times as big as England and Wales: also, it is the ancient Chinese way. Every new dynasty, in establishing itself, proceeded province by province, flattening out one before it passed on to the next.

Obviously, the difficulties in Nanking's way are enormous. The Reds, though driven from the Yangtze, have only moved elsewhere, and, it is to be feared, will gain a great accession of strength from the money and propaganda which Moscow will be able to send them, now that Sino-Russian relations have been restored. Every step in reform, moreover, means the displacement of hundreds of harpies and the multiplication of disgruntled place-seekers. The deadweight in China of intrigue and interested obstruction is almost insuperable unless a helping hand is given from outside.

Great Britain's Opportunity

Here, again, Geneva's failure is a blessing in disguise, in that it sets free the few Powers who have real interests and experience in China to come to her aid—chief among them ourselves. In spite of America's proselytising, the Chinese understand us better than anyone. The names of Gordon, Hart and Dane have a meaning for them possessed by no other foreigners. Unfortunately, for five years past, we have never talked to them in terms of realities.

The policy of indiscriminate surrender laid down in December, 1926, has failed because it assumed conditions and a mentality in China which never existed. With the best intentions, it was based on a false conception of friendship, because, to throw away just rights—as we threw away Hankow and tried to throw extraterritoriality—merely imposes on China responsibilities she manifestly cannot discharge and exposes her to fresh troubles.

Any policy that is really to help China must be founded on clear recognition of what she really needs and can do. A golden opportunity for making a fresh cast is presented by the new scheme on which Nanking is trying to work, and it ought not to be let slip. China wavers between Russia and reason, between worse chaos and better days than she has ever known. The issue may depend largely upon us.

Ramsay Romanus Sum

By Audax

MANY people must have wondered what lay at the back of the Prime Minister's recent would-be historic flight to Rome and of his suddenly conceived adoration for Signor Mussolini. Even Parliament is anxious on the subject: papers are promised to be laid.

"Would-be historic," we say; for the visit and the understandings to arise out of it were heralded as a fount from which should gush the waters of peace for a thirsting world. History, however, was not made, save indeed so far as all events form links in history's chain.

So far from sweet streams, a salty and bitter trickle issued from the Tarpeian rock, the taste of which set on edge the teeth of those to whom Mr. MacDonald held the cup. The Prime Minister's historic gesture is now seen as a tiresome blunder and an additional cause of the unrest it was designed to avert.

It is now possible to reveal how excellent were Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's intentions and how he tripped up while trying to put them into practice. What the world saw was the Prime Minister going to Rome to get Signor Mussolini's assent to his disarmament scheme. What happened in reality was that Mr. MacDonald went to discuss a scheme not for disarmament, but for the setting in which peace might prosper, and that the Duce dexterously substituted one of his own, somewhat similar in appearance, but the result of which, as shown by recent articles in these pages, must be not peace, but, if carried out, almost inevitably war.

First Thoughts . . .

The original idea of the meeting at Rome was that of our Foreign Office, and the object was to do something to prevent the further development of the present tendency of Europe to divide itself into hostile camps. The political understanding between Rome and Berlin, existing since the end of 1931, became a more important factor when the Hirtenberg and other incidents afforded proof of the long suspected fact that Italy was delivering arms to Hungary and aiming at a division of Yugoslavia that would give Rome domination in the Adriatic and, by her Hungarian entente, in the Balkans. It was felt in London that the change thus foreshadowed in the balance of power in Central and South-Eastern Europe constituted a serious stumbling-block in the way of disarmament and might very possibly wreck the hopes for the World Economic Conference.

The Foreign Office therefore conceived a move with the object of effecting the reconciliation between Italy and France that has long been the object of French diplomacy. Successive French governments have failed because the Italian demands for naval equality and for conditions in Tunisia unacceptable by France appear to be unshakable. The demand for naval equality France cannot grant, since, with her Atlantic and colonial naval responsibilities, this would mean serious inferiority to Italy, unhampered by any such, in the

Mediterranean; she cannot grant the Tunisian conditions, since these would threaten the proposed connections of her northern African possessions with those further south. For the same reasons, any attempt by Great Britain to play the honest broker must probably be doomed to failure; nevertheless the attempt was laudable and it was made.

Very gently and politely it was hinted to Signor Grandi, perhaps by Sir John Simon himself, that it would be in Italy's interest to keep British friendship by falling into line with Britain's desire for an Italian-French rapprochement, and conversely not at all to sacrifice our friendship for the sake of a policy of imperialism in Central and Southern Europe. The Italian Ambassador informed his chief, and it was arranged that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Sir John Simon should visit Rome, there to discuss in person the idea of an Anglo-Franco-Italian understanding.

And visit Rome they did. But so blue was the sky of Italy, so brilliant the evolutions of General Balbo's planes, so fervent the embracings, enthusiastic the welcome, and overwhelming the impression produced by the Eternal City on our Prime Minister, that when, on getting down to business at the Palazzo Venezia, Signor Mussolini produced his own suggestion for international progress, neither Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, nor his faithful Watson, appear to have noticed that it differed in any way from the version that the Foreign Office had carefully packed in their pockets.

. . . are Sometimes Best

The difference was so slight! All that the Duce had done was to include Germany into the scheme, turn a tripartite entente into a four-power pact, and switch its object from that of England—namely, to improve relations between France and Italy—to territorial treaty revision in the interests of Italy and Germany!

That such suggestions should have been swallowed by the British statesmen has seemed to some so mysterious that one ingenious French correspondent was driven to suppose the whole scheme to be the invention of Lord Londonderry, in emulation of his ancestor, Castlereagh's part in forming the Holy Alliance. More probably its acceptance was due to the choice mistiness of Mr. MacDonald's mind, aided by the exemplary want of initiative displayed by Sir John Simon in his conduct of foreign affairs. The latter, however, is not blind; to him, it would seem, was due the refusal to admit a suggestion by Signor Mussolini of Colonial mandates for Germany and even, it is whispered, a mention of Tanganyika. But it is thought that Mr. MacDonald did not actively protest against the notion of cutting off bits of Yugoslavia for the profit of Austria and Hungary.

Now the Four Power Convention has gone the way of so many other of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's blundering conceptions and dangerous acceptances. How dangerous such blunders may be is shown by the trail of wrath, suspicion and suspense left across

Europe by Mr. MacDonald's Roman escapade. Our Roman traveller has turned American, and forgets his follies of the Tyrrhenian sea on the Atlantic rollers.

But it is with an uneasy feeling that we think of him in Washington. If the Palazzo Venezia proved so emmollient to good sense, what may not

be the potency of the White House and its heady cordiality? Frenchmen know what a week-end at Chequers did for them with Mr. MacDonald as host and M. Herriot as the enchanted visitor. Nothing less than the first step on the inclined plane that has led, via Locarno and Thoiry, to the triumph of Hitlerism.

The Limitations of Broadcasting

By Alan Howland

IN these enlightened days, when thousands of people sit melting in the blazing sunshine to watch a Cup Final or get up at five o'clock on a winter's morning to hear the latest score from Adelaide, no sport is more popular than that of heaving brick-bats at the B.B.C. There are so many Aunt Sallies asking for attention, and there is nothing to pay. There are the Talks, for instance; there is Chamber Music, there is Dance Music, and, if by any chance the programmes should be satisfactory, it is always possible to hurl a modest coping-stone at Eric Gill's leg-theory as exemplified in his lifelike statue of Fortnum and Mason, or whoever they may be.

The participant in this game should, however, make quite certain that his missiles are directed at some remediable defect and not at one of the weaknesses which are inherent in the medium itself. Since light entertainment is in the lime-light—thanks to the fanfare for tin whistles which has greeted the appointment of Eric ("Laughing Torso") Maschwitz as Director of Variety, it may be useful to consider some of the limitations of broadcasting as far as they affect this type of programme.

It has been pointed out by a number of responsible journalists with considerable pride that a man who is funny in a music-hall is not necessarily funny when performing at the microphone. Indeed, it should be fairly obvious to most people that an artist who relies for his biggest laughs on an artistic application of carmine to the nose or on falling off a step ladder will not inevitably be a "howling success" as a broadcaster, except in the technical sense of the phrase.

Far more important is the attitude adopted by some of the artists themselves. It is a well-known fact that a number of variety artists have been touring the country with the same material for twenty years or more. Should one of these pillars of the entertainment world be asked to broadcast he is faced with two ghastly alternatives. Either he must loose off his favourite "gags" to millions of people in one fell swoop (these gentry always speak in terms of millions where broadcasting is concerned), or else he must invent a New Joke. He is obviously no business man if he adopts the first course, whereas the second is completely beyond his capabilities. The result is that he either broadcasts once only, and that at the risk of his livelihood, or else not at all. The three chief limitations to this type of programme may therefore be summarised as follows:—(1) You cannot broadcast

a red nose, (2) "dumb" acts have no place in broadcast variety, and (3) there must be a continual supply of new material.

What is Eric ("On with the Motley") Maschwitz going to do about it? What, in fact, can he do about it?

About (1) and (2) he can fortunately do absolutely nothing. The provision of material is a far more important problem, but one which is capable of solution. The new director must know of the existence of a number of people who make a living by writing material for music-hall and broadcasting comedians. They are a kind of literary tailor who will make you a pair of "gags" to measure. It must be possible to utilise and co-ordinate their services to greater effect. The statement that the country is to be scoured for fresh talent is not one to inspire any particular enthusiasm on the part of the listener.

The country has been scoured before, to little or no effect. It is a regrettable fact that the comedian who spends his life in the provinces does so, in the vast majority of cases, because he is not good enough to hold his own in London. In any case, artists so "discovered" must either have the inventive genius of a Mabel Constanduros or a Gillie Potter, or they must be provided with fresh material. Which brings us back to where we were before.

It is interesting to learn that Eric ("Smile, D— You, Smile") Maschwitz is going to spend less time in the studio and more in actual listening. But will he accept a word of friendly advice? It is useless to listen in one of the Listening Halls at Broadcasting House, it is not much use listening with a note-book in the Maschwitz homestead, it is worse than useless to listen as a part of the Studio audience. The latter is a collection of inquisitive bores who are anxious to boast that they have seen "The Announcer, you know, the One who says 'Good-night,'" who have not paid for admission and who are in consequence determined to laugh at everything. Let him listen in other people's homes, to different types of sets and in varying conditions. He can have the run of my portable any time he likes.

In the meantime, get your brickbats ready for September 1st, but make quite sure beforehand that they are going to hit the mark. If I know Eric Maschwitz as well as I think I do, he will accept them all in the spirit in which they are thrown. He may even send some of them back, suitably inscribed.

The Malady of Anglers

By Guy C. Pollock

IT was, I suppose, natural, even inevitable, that after my lawn had turned itself into the Afontwrchan—and unhappily, back again—on a midsummer day of last week, I should be victimised by a severe attack of spring fever. Especially as the doctor insisted on irritating me, while we waited for pigeons to come (they stayed away) to the ponds for a drink, with the careful history of his first Test salmon of the season.

You know all about spring fever, if you have any interest in fishing—and if you have none, you will skip this column of the *Saturday Review*. You know how the attack begins with a sort of itch; how, without detecting any sort of malady, you stand before the case, cupboard, box, peg or rack which holds your rods in a sort of misty and partially unhappy contemplation; how you wander to the lobby where the waders hang and the creels and the landing nets, just to sniff the faint and seductive smell of fishiness and rubber; how you are suddenly galvanised into physical activity as though by an electric shock and seize eagerly a rod and a reel and take them to the lawn, even though it remains materially a lawn, and satisfy yourself that the rod still throws the line and you are still master of rods; how you empty all the fly-boxes all over your family's sofa cushions and determine to sort them out and get them all into perfect order; how you are interrupted by terribly important affairs and leave the rod on the lawn and the flies on the cushions and the whole paraphernalia in disorder; how you remain "in bad" over all this for hours or days to come. You know all this. You know also about the later, more distressing, and more dangerous symptoms when the malady or complex or metabolic disturbance leads you to the window of the tackleist's shop, leads you to the window, thrusts you inside, thrusts you inside . . .

"Yes, sir?" says the assistant hopefully.

"I want" you say—a voice within you is speaking against your enfeebled will and better judgment—"I want a few flies."

And then, as he turns to reach down or up a few dozen of trays or boxes, your miserable and captive eye (pluck it out—it is better to enter the tackleist's blind than to be ruined with two eyes) is drawn to the rods resting in racks. And your prehensile fingers have no power of themselves to help themselves, and they close round the butt of a rod, and it is the rod of all rods and . . .

"Yes, sir, it has a lovely action—made specially in our own workshop—oh, indubitably an artist and a very fine angler himself—you see this new distribution of weight gives power exactly where you want it—oh, not a really expensive rod—no, I think not—yes, exactly . . ."

But you know all this. Heaven grant, my poor fellow, that we have caught the disease in time to arrest it. Do not imagine the worst. You are not—I am not—even outside the tackleist's

yet. The feverish symptoms may still be checked before we come to that. If the temperature is brought back to normal when you have only made a litter with the rods and reels and fly-books and boxes of flies and oil bottles and tins of grease and scissors and tweezers and amadou and all the rest, you have only your domestic difficulties to deal with. If the fever leaves you suddenly when you have only bought a few dozen flies which you cannot possibly want or use, bankruptcy may be kept at bay. But if once you get so far as the handling of rods, you are in *extremis*. It is, I am bound to tell you, all up with you.

For me, by the grace of Leviathan, the malady was broken up. I had made no more than a dozen casts on the lawn when Winkle, the reputed Pekinese, came to join in these mad revels. And by the time I had disentangled my best reel line, which she seized in her teeth, stripped the reel, found its mechanism clogged with dirt, and put it right with paraffin and black-lead I had no more heart for fishing.

Indeed—it may of course be only a reaction, the sort of rebound on which hearts may be impaled as on one horn of a dilemma—I do not know if I shall ever fish again. It does mean—does it not?—an inordinate number of pains for a rather ridiculous recreation. Who am I, with time roaring out on a furious tide and the last world still to conquer, who am I to waste hours watching the unbroken surface of a chalk stream and waiting for the rise to begin? I have wasted too many hours that way. Who am I to dissipate physical energies already impaired by age and risk a stroke or arthritis or some other evil consequence by stumbling and slipping and staggering and sweating among the loose boulders and the heavy water and the racing shallows and the deep deceptive pools of the Afontwrchan from dewy morn to dusky eve? And in waders that might fill with water and drown me, as they have threatened to do in previous mishaps?

Why should I bother any more to tear a finger to bits on rusty barbed wire and tie it up and go on fishing with a left hand? Why should I walk seven miles home across the moor in waders and nearly faint at the cross roads? Why should I motor two hundred miles to do all this and pay for a poor lodging? Why should I stay with Mæcnas, who bores me a lot, and get a permanent crick in the back casting with a sixteen foot rod for his sulky salmon? And all for an uncertain reward, a mere transient, illusive satisfaction?

Hades! say I. I have caught lots of fish. I have others to fry. The salt has lost its savour. I shall give up fishing. You may have my rod. You may have my favourite rod—after I have had that day on the Lea promised me for the first week in May.

Firmer Fetters

By Petronius

PLAIGNEZ les pauvres garçons Qui sont en prison—runs the jingle in a recent French film. And the producer proceeds to show that those outside prison wear fetters more firmly rivetted than convicts. Of all things in the world we mortal men do most love to be in prison, and nothing makes us more diffident, bewildered, angry and wretched than when some sudden storm or slow developing crack splits the wall and bursts the chains imprisoning our limbs, and for a few brief seconds we are free. There are habits, there is marriage, there is work, snobbery, worldly vanity, mere inertia, idleness; there are men's clothes.

Every generation of men vows to break its chains and reform its clothes. What happens? A little curiosity, a few jokes, some sneers greet the attempt and the experimenter gives up in despair or else pursues his lonely way to earn the name of dandy or eccentric. Two generations back a well-known barrister steadily refused to wear the then obligatory tails or frock coat, and always went to Lincoln's Inn in a lounge jacket and top hat; one may see him doing it in Thackeray's thumbnail sketches. He never achieved a position higher than that of Queen's Remembrancer. Thirty years later Sir Edward Clarke won for himself the reputation of a dude by invariably donning, except in court, a grey frock coat. He was, it is said, once refused admission to Buckingham Palace because it was not black. Edward VII, when Prince of Wales, tried to get men to wear dark purple swallow tails: no one would follow his lead. Oscar Wilde's knee breeches were held proof of his immorality before in fact he had taken leave of normal standards. Lord Asford in his Irish kilt was thought next door to mad.

The Royal Example

Unwritten sartorial laws reck not of place or convenience. Have not cabinet ministers when shooting in Scotland been forced desperately to wire for frock coats and topers, or to hire local articles, on receipt of an unexpected summons to Balmoral? I do not know if the case of a man invited to spend the week-end at another royal palace should stamp him as a reformer or merely negligent. On arrival he was found not to have a top hat for church-going on Sunday. His friend the equerry said: "Ah well, I'll make it all right for you." So next day he attended church in a billycock, only to find black glances and the cold shoulder. On return from church he reproached the equerry: "You promised to make it all right." To which the other replied in wrath: "So I did, you juggins. Of course, you oughtn't to have come at all. I said you were ill."

Thirteen years ago three million men came back from the wars, all swearing an oath that in future they would dress as they pleased and above

all would never, never again put on a "morning" coat or a top hat. To-day there are almost as many topers in London as before the war. Who would now be the brave man to go to Ascot or the Eton and Harrow without one? Nor is England alone the victim. No self-respecting Frenchman would go to a funeral save in his "huit reflets," and more white top hats were noted at last year's Grand Prix than ever almost in this generation. Let us not speak of recent dress reformers who hold congresses and allot one another prizes for sham Greek or 18th century costumes, or wander in planter rig along Unter den Linden or Piccadilly. Their poor efforts are in vain. Scarlet and the busby have replaced khaki for the army. We are all back to our fetters.

IF

being the advice of a successful Member of Parliament to a son about to take up politics.

(AFTER KIPLING)

If you can keep your seat when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can swear the country's doomed without you,
And make the voting mob believe it too;
If you can hear a flawless argument,
And then demolish it with clever lies,
Or be entirely lacking in accomplishment,
And yet look monstrous good, talk monstrous
wise.
If you can censor foreign food—and buy it;
If you can lose—and swear to all you've won;
If you can utter slander and deny it,
Or vow you only spoke the words in fun;
If you can plant the very lines you've written,
When brought against you, on some other man,
Or give a talk on Holidays in Britain,
And then pack up and spend your own in
Cannes.
If you can make the working man your friend,
And still pay courtship to the richer classes,
Or further cuts in wages recommend,
And straight away deny it to the masses;
If you can speak of clearing up distress,
And never give a penny to assist,
Unless it's going to get into the Press
And so may add some voters to your list.
If you can speak with erudite disdain
On schemes of which you do not know a thing;
If you can sponsor plans you know are vain,
And speak of the prosperity they'll bring;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty lies and each one with a stab in it,
Yours is success, my son! Your're bound to win it,
And—which is more—you'll end up in the
Cabinet.

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Music and Musicians By Herbert Hughes

RUSSIAN opera at Sadler's Wells! A very few years ago such a proposition would have been sniffed at as being not only outside the scope of practicability but the kind of idea in which our public would not have the slightest interest.

The faith that can move mountains has made the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells what they are. Miracles have happened and continued to happen in both places. Every sort of obstacle is faced, attacked, and circumvented or overcome with the kind of cheerfulness that is almost hilarity. Miss Bayliss stops at nothing, and will not stop. A quarter of a century ago, and more, the late Robin Legge recognised her real and potential force, sympathised with her ideals, and with a disinterested enthusiasm that has no parallel in London journalism to-day, backed her for all he was worth. (Legge's influence here was simply incalculable: it had endless repercussions). Brain-wave succeeded brain-wave, and Miss Bayliss gathered round her working artists like Harcourt Williams, Geoffrey Toye, Lawrence Collingwood, Clive Carey, J. B. Gordon and Constant Lambert.

"The Snow Maiden"

It is not to our credit that *The Snow Maiden* of Rimsky-Korsakov should have been over fifty years in reaching London; rather is it to the discredit of successive Covent Garden syndicates who have so persistently turned blind eyes and deaf ears to works of the Russian School. (Sir Thomas Beecham's now historic ventures were rather outside that tradition.) And the delightful fact that is now permitted to percolate into the consciousness of a Sadler's Wells audience is that this early work by the composer of the familiar and hectic *Scheherazade* is brimming over with tunefulness and charm. It is not, indeed, unlikely that in Edward Agate's translation it has come to stay and that it will take its place in the repertory along with "safe" works like *Butterfly*, *Bohème*, *Carmen*.

One is, being Western, a little disarmed by the genial *liaison* between the supernatural and the natural, between pagan deities and peasants, in this Russian story as treated by Rimsky-Korsakov. Snegourochka, the Snow Maiden, daughter of Winter and Spring, is charmingly dressed in white, with a Russian cap and white top-boots. In the Prologue, where you see a hoary long-bearded Winter taking farewell of Spring, she is a very definite little human being. She is adolescent, and in the first Act she wins the hearts of all the young men in the village, though her own heart is attracted only to the plaintive songs sung by a shepherd. The story begins to move when a merchant, Misgir, already betrothed to a rich peasant's daughter, falls in love with Snegourochka at first sight and scandalously jilts his fiancée. In the second Act the Tsar Berendey, who is incidentally a great patron of the arts and very fond of painting in water-colour, comes to hear all about the jilting, and condemns the fickle merchant to exile; being inclined to leniency, however, he postpones carry-

ing out the sentence on condition that the merchant actually wins the love of the Snow Maiden, with the shepherd as rival suitor. In the next Act you gather that Snegourochka now really loves the shepherd, who in his turn has fallen in love with the jilted one. At the depth of her desolation Misgir, the merchant, finds her alone and attempts to make love to her, but the Faun (who played a part in the Prologue) wrests the merchant away from her, and he, the merchant, spends the night chasing her apparition.

In the fourth Act the supernatural and natural are again marvellously in close relation. Snegourochka prays her mother for the gift of love, her heart is melted, and in the early dawn when Misgir appears she falls into his arms. Spring, her mother, had warned her to avoid the "jealous eye of the sun"; and when the people assemble for the festival of the Sun-God the Snow Maiden, forgetful of her mother's words, permits herself to be led before the Tsar by her now-beloved Misgir, with other betrothed couples. At this emotional climax the sun's rays strike her, and she melts away in the merchant's arms, and he, overwhelmed with grief, throws himself in the lake.

This venturesome production, directed as to the staging by Clive Carey and as to the music by Lawrance Collingwood, should be missed by no one who cares for opera. The orchestral playing is of a higher standard than ever; the scenery and dresses by Elizabeth Polunin are continually interesting, the Dance of the Tumblers in Act III, led by Stanley Judson, unforgettable. The little lady who takes the rôle of Snegourochka, Miss Olive Dyer, is surely one of the most diminutive and dainty of sopranos on this or any operatic stage. She plays this exacting part with a touch of aloofness that is at all times attractive. Miss Joan Cross and Miss Edith Coates sing well throughout, and Tudor Davies's light tenor voice seems to fit nicely the Tsar who dabbles in water-colour. But the outstanding voice is that of Betsy de la Porte, a young singer who has lately arrived in this country from South Africa and plays the part of Spring. Faultless diction and a rich mezzo-contraalto voice perfectly produced are not often met with in novices. She is divinely endowed with both.

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SHORT STORY

The Brink By Douglas Newton

MISS HOUSE picked up the letters and her note-book and went out giving Mr. Blayne her little, nervous smile. And Mr. Blayne stared at the clock, which said sixty-five, and scowled at his own thoughts.

Did Miss House and her smile mean anything, he wanted to know? Was she ready to accept his advances or was she afraid of them?

Mr. Blayne was not one of your bold, bad bosses of fiction. He had worked more than twenty-five sober and extremely prosperous years at his business without casting as much as a glad eye at one of his office girls, or, in fact, any girl. He was, in fact, an ingrained old bachelor, or had been until Miss House had started taking down his letters.

Miss House was—different. There was something about her that made his pulse flutter; prettiness, of course; dash, too, and a way of looking at him, a sex appeal, he supposed, that made her different from all the girls he had ever met. Miss House stirred him up . . . he was ready to forget his years and do Tom Fool things for her. Yes, even be a husband.

Only—well—just what was *her* attitude?

Inexperienced, he could not guess, and fifty-odd hates taking risks. He'd look such a darn fool if he made a mistake. . . He saw himself in the mirror across his room—heavy and greyish, red-faced and dull-looking. . . Almost a grandfather chap. He could almost hear her saying: "Fat old ass, the nerve of him thinking any girl would look twice at him!"

But was that her attitude?

Certainly she was always the one to volunteer for these late letters that kept her alone in the office with him, and that and that nervous smile of hers might mean she liked him. On the other hand, it might mean emphatically the reverse. A nice girl, one of the seniors and feeling her responsibility, she might be merely staying because she did not like the younger girls to be left alone with him. Some employers had very unpleasant reputations . . . especially foolish old men of fifty-odd. . . And that smile might mean that. She was afraid of him. He looked at himself in the glass again—yes, surely more easy to fear than to love.

He groaned. He wished he knew more about these things, about girls. . . Quite a lot of young girls *did* marry men of over fifty, and Emily House must be getting on for thirty herself, anyhow. . . And he really was very attracted by her. If he only knew . . . if he could only manage to put the question without seeming a senile old fool. And, oh hang, what was that he'd knocked off his desk? His fountain pen. . . And it'd rolled under, of course.

He had to get down on hands and knees to retrieve it. And men with his figures are not good at that sort of thing. As he rose he hit his head a terrific crash against the underside of the

desk, and it was one of those all-steel desks, too. He fell back to the floor, stunned. . .

Or he supposed he was stunned . . . but the experience was most odd.

He found himself sitting sharply upright and staring ahead and thinking:

"What was that? Sounds as if the old beast had tumbled over . . . or is it a trick of some sort?"

Mr. Blayne was not only astonished at thinking like that, he was even more astonished to find that he was looking at his own private office door *from the outside!*

And that was not the only remarkable thing. There was a typewriter in front of him, a typewriter which his own hands were tapping . . . or rather, not his hands, but a pair of slim, white, shiningly manicured hands—*Miss House's hands!*

For a moment those hands hovered over the keyboard while his mind thought: "I'm not to be caught by the hold-my-sick-head-on-your-breast wheeze . . . let the nasty old thing lie!"

Then the hands went on typing.

Mr. Blayne grasped the situation instantly. His body really did lie stunned in his private office, but his spirit had found its way out to Miss House's body in the outer office, could listen to her thoughts—not that there was any pleasure in that. . . Her hands tapped briskly for a minute, then hesitated again. . .

"I wonder if it is a fake or a real accident," she thought. "I should hate even him to be hurt and neglected. . . But girls have to be so careful—especially with these sly old ones."

She typed another couple of lines, stopped, stared at Mr. Blayne's office door.

"No—he's not moving. . . What ought I to do? If I go in and that gross creature begins to paw me I'll have to slap his face, and there's the end of *my* job. . . Only, he may be dying. . . No, I don't believe that. . . It's a trick. He's been leading up to this so long. . . I've seen it in his Satyr's eye. . . No, he's not really hurt, Emily House. Don't let yourself be fooled—isn't this the very reason why you're taking over these late letters rather than the younger girls? You foresaw something like this. . . And, oh, heavens, the toad probably takes that as a sign that I'm in love with him. . . Why can't men of that age and girth *see* that they're positively repulsive to any sort of decent girl. . . Ah, thank goodness, he's moving . . . lost patience, the old devil, I suppose. . . Sees I'm not to be trapped that way. . ." Mr. Blayne was, in fact, moving.

In the same strange way that his spirit had got into Miss House's body, it had got back into his own. He was beginning to rise with a savagely aching head from the floor.

He shambled limply towards the filter and drew a glass of water. As he sipped it his wits came back and he thought: "Darned odd experience.

Damned odd! Sort of momentary soul transference. . . Yes, undoubtedly that. . . Odd, and even at the price of this head, worth while. . . What a fool I might have made of myself. . . Of course, a nice girl like that can only regard me with repugnance. . . Ye gods, what an escape!"

"Really, my dear, I can't understand it at all," Miss Emily House told her best friend a week or so later. "Honestly, I thought I had the old dear hooked. I did everything I could to bring him along, stayed late over those fool letters to be alone with him, gave him my softest glances and smiles. And I'll swear he was ready to propose, too. . . that last night he was on the very brink, yes, the very brink, I'm sure positive. I could see it in his eye, and the way he spoke and the way he fiddled with his fountain pen. . . And

then, just as I was expecting him to come out, or call me in again, to ask me to be Mrs. Blayne with all the income thereof, he appeared very red in the face with his hat and coat on and told me that the letters could wait until to-morrow as he was going home. . . And home he went, and has been as standoffish as the Sphinx ever since. No, I don't know what happened, and I don't see what *could* have, my dear. Nobody went into him and nobody 'phoned, and the only sound I heard from his room was his kicking his toe against a chair or something. I was just about to rush in, in fact, to do sweet anxiety, when I heard him go across to the filter. . . No, the whole thing's a mystery to me, I just don't understand, all I know is that I've lost the best chance of a good marriage I'm ever likely to have."

THIS WEEK'S ARGUMENT

Does the End Justify the Means?

YES, BY ALPHA

NATURALLY, it depends on the end. But I may be allowed, for the purpose of this argument, to assume that the end is in itself good. On that assumption the end is the all-important thing. So long as the end be achieved, the means necessary become trivial. Preferably and if possible the means are honest, candid, kind and courteous. But if such conduct or measures are not possible, what then?

A lie must be told, or a whole bagful of lies, in order that wrong may be righted or the ultimate truth established? Then tell the necessary lies.

Who but a weakling unfit for great responsibility has risked the issue of a battle because the lives of thousands of men had to be thrown into the scale? The men are sent deliberately to death. But the battle, otherwise lost, may thus be won. Has any real captain of industry hesitated to get rid of a man, who has not in fact done any wrong, when the issue of a large deal in big business depends on the elimination of that one personality? Admittedly one grave injustice must be done. With it comes prosperity for hundreds or thousands of others. Without it hundreds or thousands must suffer.

Is it wrong to deceive the simple—to teach the ignorant man religion without confessing to him personal doubts or reservations? Of course it is right to do so. The man is ignorant. His mind would be bewildered and his faith destroyed if he had any suspicion of doubt or reservation in the superior intelligence. To bewilder his mind and shake his faith would be both cruelty and crime. So be dishonest and conceal the truth, in order that the man's life may be healed.

A woman's honour is to be saved by a lie; a friend's contentment is to be preserved by a petty theft; the secret may be wrested from disease at the expense of intensified suffering and extended death. Tell the lie, commit the theft, intensify the suffering. The end justifies the means.

NO, BY A STUDENT OF LIFE

THIS saying is only true in a sense in which it is never used. Every means to the ultimate end of life needs no justification, because it is necessarily part and parcel of that end: the distinction between means and end in this sense is purely verbal. What is the *summum bonum*, the purpose of existence and the universe? The perfection of the self, the utmost possible expression of the divine energy which lies equally behind murderer and saint, in the terms of this deliberately imperfect world.

We say to ourselves that we will not hurt people's feelings—surely a noble ideal. Probably there is no escape from duty, which has been responsible for more deadly harm than this solicitude for other people's feelings, this altruism, which disguises the depths of selfishness. For do we really care about other people's suffering? All too often it only affects us in so far as it is reflected within ourselves and causes us pain.

Moreover, we probably admit that suffering is good for the soul and yet ask for pardon because we have spared our neighbour the truth which his or her spirit needs.

We can play the same trick on ourselves by reversing the procedure. Our love for the truth is such that we must give a twist to the arrowhead which is near another's heart. Will the extra agony help that other? It may, but it will be damnable to ourselves, because the truth was told with the brutality that is never true to pander to our own self-righteousness. There is no lie that matters, as Plato knew long ago, but the lie in the soul, the damnation of self-deception.

So we choose some specious end and take the easy goal of devoting ourselves to the salvation of others, quite forgetting the fate of the blind who lead the blind. It was quite jolly in the past to torture others for the sake of their souls. It is so much easier to run about and be careful of others than it is to be solicitous for our own perfection.

THEATRE

Garrick. "Beggars in Hell." By George Cuddon and Patrick Turnbull.

FIRST, the acting. This may seem an inversion of the proper rule, which is to begin by a consideration of the play and then to ask oneself how it has been presented. For, after all, the play is the most important thing in the theatre, and we have all known instances of plays that might have taken our fancy but have been spoilt by some fault in casting, or failure of actor or producer to realise the atmosphere instinct in every play and requiring to be brought out on the stage. But there are also other plays whose appeal to the public depends preponderantly on that of the players: without the keenness of this human contact, they would stand but small chance. Such a play is "Beggars in Hell."

The acting, then, in Mr. Leon M. Lion's new production is on a notably high level. And perhaps less the acting itself than the team-work of the actors, who are towards one another as members of a perfect eight on the river. This results from the art of the producer. An error often made is to suppose that "production" means essentially costumes, scenery and lighting effects: these have their importance, often great, but the essence of the producer's task is precisely analogous to that of a coach on the tow-path—namely, to get uniform style from his men, the maximum of life and drive, and the perfect finish that involves a minimum of waste. This is now to be seen at the Garrick, where Mr. Frank Harvey makes a magnificent No. 7 to Mr. Lion's distinguished stroking. The heavyweight of the crew is Mr. Harry Wilcoxon, and behind him Messrs. Louis Hayward and Geoffrey Gomer put their backs into it with a tense emotion always tuned to the main object of sending the boat along like a live thing skimming the water.

Stroke deserves a word to himself. To drop the metaphor, we are at Perwindi, a station on the North-West Indian frontier, and Mr. Lion plays the part of Jaggat Singh, tailor, moneylender and blackmailer, whose cunning has woven a spider's web around the officers and their wives, their wives' lovers, and their very batmen. A sinister figure is Jaggat Singh, and the beauty of Mr. Lion's performance is that he does not play him in the least in a sinister way: to himself Jaggat Singh is no rogue, but a man of legitimate business, nay, rather one to be proud of his success in fleecing fools, and particularly English fools, who tumble into his hands with their ridiculous concepts of justice, fairplay, and succour to the "under-dog." Jaggat Singh, complacently expounding his philosophy to his brother, comes to life before us as an astonishingly real character, a word which reminds us that in its fullest sense Mr. Lion is the finest character actor on the English stage to-day. It is not his ingenious make-up—that pointed usurer's nose seeming to quiver as it scents fresh victims—but the mental effort, so effortless in its effect, that fires our imagination; it is that exquisite slow use of the hands, that deep immobility of the eye, that posed smile which fills us with a contenting sense of actual, thinking personality, and saves the play from the charge of melodrama.

Mrs. Marriott, the colonel's wife, has started the coil leading to ruin and death. Extravagant, reckless, always in debt, she drives one lover after another into Jaggat Singh's clutches. Perhaps lovely Miss Leonora Corbett is a shade lacking in passion of the flesh to be quite convincing as a woman responsible for a murder and two suicides: we see her kissed, but miss the flaming thrill that kisses should burn into her body. But the ardour of the two lovers we see—Anderson, the violent Eurasian I.C.S. man, as Mr. Wilcoxon portrays him, and young Lieutenant Winter, tormented and blind with love, a part in which Mr. Hayward betters his success in "Another Language"—give us conviction for her. To get Madge Marriott's kisses, Winter borrows from Jaggat Singh, and when Lieutenant Richard Boyd, who has backed his promissory note, pays the money to clear it, instead of using the money for this purpose, pays off another debt of Mrs. Marriott's, thus leaving Boyd still at the moneylender's mercy.

The coil is cut by Major Boyd, Richard's elder brother. Here we come to the inner meaning of the play. Its authors are out to show up the system by which young officers in India are forced, through high expenses and low pay, to borrow at exorbitant interest and, under the surface of pleasure and excitement, find themselves helpless flies in the spider's web—beggars in hell indeed. Those who know must say whether the charge is true, but it is certain that our authors write from the fierceness of bitter hearts, and their bitterness begets dramatic belief in us. Major Boyd goes to Jaggat Singh's shop, forces him at the revolver's muzzle to disgorge his papers, burns them, then strangles the moneylender and leaves him for dead, happy to pay with his own life for the salvation of his brother and his young brother officers.

But Jaggat Singh is not dead. He revives from the trance he had deliberately induced to save his skin. Major Boyd will not hang. The papers are burned, and, though Jaggat Singh makes an unavailing attempt to trade on his knowledge, his intrigue is defeated by the inflexibly straight Englishman, and the scandal hushed up. Winter shoots himself: his death will be attributed to sun-stroke, despite, as the Major bitterly remarks, an almost record week for rain. For the moment Major Boyd has won. But the system goes on. In the final minute we see yet another young officer making an appointment in Jaggat Singh's back shop, where "everything will be all right." Mr. Lion's smile as he speaks the words is majestically imperturbable.

"Beggars in Hell" has thrilling minutes. Its authors have not sufficient hold of their material to avoid some faltering and empty patches. They are pulled through by the actors.

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by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman

EDITH EVANS

NEW NOVELS

The Captain's Curio. By Eden Phillpotts. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

City Without a Heart. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

One of the Ten Thousand. By Stephen Graham. Benn. 3s. 6d.

Mrs. Barry. By Frederick Niven. Collins. 7s. 6d.

[REVIEWED BY ANNE ARMSTRONG.]

AS a tale of Devonshire and the terrifying picture of a fanatical man who stole and murdered in order that good might come—"The Captain's Curio" is certainly well worth reading. As a mystery novel (and this statement is well displayed on the jacket) it is no good at all. In the first chapter Detective-Inspector James Midwinter writes, in reporting to his Chief, an account of the murder and the comings and goings of those who were connected with the dead man, and from this account a child could grasp how the murder was committed, by whom, and, very soon after the first chapter, why. It is true that Mr. Phillpotts has not stooped to drag false herrings across the paths of the unwary, but the tale certainly loses a great deal of interest by being too obvious. The mistake about the book is to pretend that it is a mystery novel—for it is not. But Devonshire is there; in the inimitable Phillpotts manner.

"City Without A Heart" is anonymous—by nobody in particular. And that, perhaps, is wise of nobody in particular.

Mary, the heroine of this strange Hollywood story, is the centre piece and accounts for its strangeness. The first part of the book shows Mary as a wild slip of a Cornish girl, where she is discovered by a film magnate and deported to Hollywood. Within a very few days of her arrival there this Cornish girl (who, naturally, knew more about goats than cars) is driving her own "auto" round and about. Fearsome adventures, jealousies that nearly "do her down," and the Triumph In The End all make the extraordinarily unreal career of an amazingly unreal person. Very wise of nobody in particular to be nobody in particular!

Frederick Niven's "Mrs. Barry" was a widow. And the most unselfish widow that ever has been or ever will be. There is a small son and no visible means of support for either of them except the lodgers. Mr. Niven, in fact, had his stage well set, but he proceeded to sentimentalise to such an extent that one reader at least found herself smiling at what might have been a very real drama.

Stephen Graham's "One of the Ten Thousand" is a masterly character study of the petty criminal. Mordaunt has no redeeming features. He is resting at Pentonville on the first page; he is subsequently released and on the last page he is once more to be detained at the King's pleasure. He has a criminal face and a criminal slouch, and there is little doubt that his life will be one long succession of prisons. The picture of Pentonville would seem to be a fair one; neither exaggerated nor mitigated. At least, ignorant of the procedure at Pentonville, that is what I suppose. But it is not the sort of book which I shall ever wish to re-read.

The Last of Chéri. By Colette, translated by Viola Garvin. Gollancz. 7s. 6d.

Quintet. By Esther Meynell. Chapman & Hall. 8s. 6d.

Extension Night. By Roland Wild. Rich & Cowan. 7s. 6d.

Chinese Dust. By J. Van Dyke. Jarrolds. 7s. 6d.

HERE are four extremely competent pieces of work, all differing from each other about as widely as possible, but each in its way a piece of craftsmanship to which one gladly doffs the critical cap. There's the rub of the novel reviewer to-day. Perhaps the level of competence in story-making and in the technique of writing has never been so high generally, and yet, how few novels are dictated by real literary inspiration!

There are, however, two amongst these four which can claim that precious gift—"The Last of Chéri" and "Quintet."

I have often wondered if open confession is good for the soul, but here I risk it. I feel like the Irishman whose friend came to commiserate with him on the death of his wife.

"Yes," he replied, "Sarah and I have been married for thirty years. I shall miss her. But, damme, I never liked her."

Chéri never really captured either my heart or my head. He infused in me the very greatest respect for his creator, although, for me, she creates an atmosphere which sends me hurrying to a cold bath. But Colette could write.

In some ways "The Last of Chéri" is the ablest of all Colette's work. The translation by Miss Viola Garvin is acutely sympathetic.

Mrs. Meynell is refreshingly Germanic-traditional. This is the way to write novels about musicians. "Quintet" has musical knowledge, a great understanding of musicians' psychology, and a most pleasing ripple of sentimentality running throughout. It is a sequel to "Grave Fairytale," and it held me, in spite of the fact that its theme is not so inherently dynamic, as that delightful book did.

Both "Extension Night" and "Chinese Dust" are, apparently, first novels. But both are obviously the work of experienced craftsmen in the art of writing. Mr. Roland Wild is clearly a first-rate journalist, keenly observant and making all his points with a definite sense of drama. He would probably write an unusually good play.

In "Extension Night" he has, as his title suggests, taken, from the dining hour to two o'clock, the life of the restaurant in the great Hotel Alba, just by the Savoy on the Embankment. Naturally enough, all its life centres round the personality of Josef, the maitre d'hotel, but Mr. Wild has brought all the fortunate recipients of Josef's benignity to life in fascinating fashion.

His publishers state that they commissioned "Chinese Dust," although it is a first novel, from Mr. Van Dyke when he outlined the story to them. That is to be believed. Mr. Van Dyke knows his China intimately, and the tale he has to tell of insurrection, plague, and the eccentricities of "Whites" of all kinds bears the hallmark of experience upon it throughout. At present he leans somewhat towards a hectic style of writing, but here is another writer to be watched with interest.

W.F.

After the Party. By R. D. Dorthy. Secker. 6s.

Gentleman by Birth. By Miles Mander. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

The Hollow Field. By Marcel Aymé. Constable. 7s. 6d.

Image and Superscription. By J. Leslie Mitchell. Jarrolds. 7s. 6d.

THERE are those who say the novel is "played out," like Parliament, marriage and other stock diversions; and, if it were true, the symptom would be gloomy and decisive. For when mankind turns from tales, his planet will be entering the shadow. But humanity dotes more and more on tales, which is one reason why the novel is not played out; and the second is that its form is still evolving, borrowing, developing and renewing its matter in the way of all healthy tissue.

"After the Party" is a book in which the process of experiment is bold and visible. The chapters in most books open out of each other like the joints of a telescope, but here is a story offered, as it were, in separate lots; a series of episodes held apart by intervals and pauses, so that the final effect must depend on clever juxtaposition, rather than climax. This cinematograph method, with its quick switches, "cut backs" and parallel glimpses, is momentarily puzzling and momentarily resented, like most departures from custom; but when the technique is seen, one is pleased. And it is suited well to a novel which sketches types and places, but in which events keep fairly quiet.

Two brothers are the twin pillars of the story. The author has scorned to make them widely dissimilar and has even allowed them the same occupation; thus his skill in differentiating the pattern of the two lives is thrown up better. The Party, attended by excellently caricatured cranks; John's domestic "scene"; Duffield's, the palace of advertising in which the brothers are servitors; the portrait of the father—these are by a sure hand. The story and its treatment are always interesting, and as for the problem—which of the brothers was the real success—that is for the taste and fancy of the reader.

Miles Mander has already a reputation outside authorship, and his second novel will forward him as a writer. Here is the sad eventful history of a girl who begins as a mistress and ends as a murderess (she had ginger hair); and one warmly sanctions her last act—her partner was much nicer dead. Events are related in diary form, and the style of the narrators is shrewdly varied.

"The kitchen was tidy. In the middle of it Aurélie hung by the neck suspended from a stout cord"—Marcel Aymé believes in the journalistic maxim of stating the point in the first sentence. The suicide of a peasant's wife rouses the countryside, starts a feud and provides this promising French writer with an original idea. The translation is by Helen Waddell and excellent. J. Leslie Mitchell has done better than "Image and Superscription," an over-lavish, too-ambitious book, which ought to be blue-pencilled and brought to order.

A.B.

An Exciting Life-time

Hot Air in Cold Blood. By Brigadier-General Guy Livingston, C.M.G. Selwyn and Blount. 18s.

AS a volume of personal reminiscences which is properly described as "racy," "Hot Air in Cold Blood" can be recommended warmly. People—that is to say the majority of people—who enjoy adventure, intrigue, personalities, great names, good stories, will find some three hundred pages and not one of them dull or stupid. General Livingston, himself a live wire with an alert intensity of body and mind, has dashed through life, lived dangerously, worked hard and, it may be imagined, never rested either at work or play. So this, a sort of autobiography, is exciting and vivid. And it holds all sorts of facts, instances, and lessons which have a particular value.

Guy Livingston meant to be a regular soldier when he was at St. Paul's. But fate intervened and his way to the regular army was by more round-about courses, beginning as a corporal of Imperial Yeomanry in the South African War.

Fate, however, had obviously destined him for aviation and his account of its earliest days, when he was closely associated with Grahame-White, are not less interesting than his connection with its latest stages, as the representative of the firm of Vickers in various South American republics. Perhaps fortunately for General Livingston, he does not seem to have included Soviet Russia in the wide sphere of his military and commercial activities.

The General has had the mortification, common to all prophets and visionaries, of realising that if only his advice had been accepted when he gave it, the course even of history might have been altered. Thus it was with his repeated attempts to spur the War Office and the Admiralty in 1910 into a real enthusiasm for the still infantile air arm. In those days, of course, "nobody dreamt of going into the air if there was any wind, and consequently practically all the instruction in flying took place in the very early hours of the morning or late afternoon." Eventually two officers were selected by the War Office to act as observers at a special flying demonstration at Hendon, and one of them, who showed himself tremendously keen, was the Sir Frederick Sykes of to-day, Governor of Bombay. And of course Lord Northcliffe gave a great deal of help to young Livingston, an example followed in later years, especially during the war, by Lord Rothermere.

Of the war and the war years General Livingston writes always with sanity, courage, and interest. But his most important reminiscence is of August 2, 1914, when his Territorial battalion had entrained for its ordinary annual training. But "the 1st London Brigade had long been detailed for its special duties in the event of war, which were to guard the railway line from Waterloo to Southampton until after the embarkation of the Expeditionary Force for France." And the battalion had only been travelling for about an hour and a half when they were ordered back to London. But it may be "stretching it" to say, as the General does, that therefore "there is little

doubt that the War Office knew on August 2 that the Expeditionary Force was going overseas." Precautions, after all, are a part of prudence.

Through the war Livingston was one of the men with a charmed life and he might seem to be one of those people called, rather commonly, "fortune's favourites." But, charmed life or no, his successes have clearly been due to his own character and characteristics, and he makes no bones about his failures.

The later chapters deal with his adventures and misadventures as the representative of Vickers, and they reveal again, by chapter and verse, the familiar story of the defects of our manufacturers and their organisations in a modern competitive world, the defects of our consular service and system, the defects of our national character, and the supine indifference to British trade of successive British governments.

But read the book and find it all out. G.C.P.

The Outline of India

India Marches Past. By R. J. Minney. Jarrolds. 16s.

(REVIEWED BY LORD MONKSWELL)

"**I**NDIA Marches Past" is—together with other qualities—almost everything a hand-book should be.

In less than 300 pages it gives a clear and intelligible outline of Indian history from 1600 to the present day, sets forth the conditions in which the native population live, and gives facts which appear to remove all doubt that British supreme control is the only thing that preserves India from relapsing into the chaos which has been her normal condition for the greater part of her history so far as it is known to us.

A temperate and well-informed book of this kind is just what is wanted at a moment like the present when the future of India has been made a political question of the most controversial kind, and any common-sense attempt to treat the question on its merits is overridden as the vapouring of "reactionary prejudice" (otherwise "sanity").

But, even now, when our rulers are preparing to commit what appears to us to be a piece of unprecedented imbecility, we may find comfort in the history of the past. As is made abundantly clear in Mr. Minney's pages, Great Britain has never had an Indian policy. The British pioneers went to India to trade, and it is only a long chapter of accidents that, in spite of repeated mistakes and much hawing indecision at critical points, has landed us where we are. India gets on very well when her British rulers make up their minds to rule and at the same time avoid official blunders of capital importance, but during the whole British occupation it has periodically happened that Great Britain has fallen back on a "peace-at-any-price policy"—in other words, has made concessions extorted, or apparently extorted, by threats—with the inevitable result of increased trouble.

Anyone who still thinks that India is fit for self-government should consult the second section of Mr. Minney's excellent book.

"Where Never The Brains Shall Meet"

Spacetime Inn. A play. By Lionel Britton. Putnam. 5s.

[REVIEWED BY W.H.B.]

Two Cockney Proletarians who've won the Irish sweep

Take refuge from the weather in an inn,
(Gawblimey! You shall 'ear abaht the company they keep,

An' the talk—there wasn't 'arf a blasted din!).
There was Shakespeare, Dr. Johnson, Queen Victoria, Mother Eve,

The Emperor Napoleon, Bernard Shaw,
Karl Marx, the Queen of Sheba; Bill and Jim could scarce believe

The curious things they heard, and what they saw.

There's a lot of high-brow talk by Marx and Johnson—Bill and Jim

Are made to feel they've quite a lot to learn,
Bill is rude to Queen Victoria and Marx is rude to him,

While Shaw is rude to everyone in turn.
Eve vamps the little Cockneys, Queen Victoria is vexed,

And rebukes her for her scantiness of clothes.
"You go to 'ell," says Bill, "we won the sweep, see?" that's his text,

Which Jim supports with virile Cockney oaths.
They think their sweep's been stolen by this "bleedin' crowd" of ghosts,

And after one or two exciting scenes
They escape and with explosives which they find blow up their hosts

And the Spacetime Inn is blown to smithereens.
What lesson does this teach, you ask? Ah, please don't ask me *that*.

As Jim (or Bill) would probably reply
"Gaw! 'ow the 'ell do I know what the bloke is drivin' at?"

Find out yourself; it costs five bob to buy.

Shooting the Bull. By D. Ellbey. Grayson. 10s. 6d.

This book may be recommended to all non-journalists who want to be entertained and—thank heavens!—the number of those who do not write for newspapers exceeds almost to astronomical figures the sum of those who do. Here we have a picture of journalism in this country and U.S.A. painted in the flashing colours which it does not possess. The author has omitted the dull moments which are really the most important in the life of a writer, whether he is a journalist or a poet, and careers along from sensation to sensation at vertiginous speed. Of course, journalism is not a bit like that, nor is life a bit like most novels. Yet there are plenty of high spirits and enjoyment of life in this book—it is really not worth while trying to understand what its title means—and the reader will find in it an hour or two of pleasant amusement. It is unfortunate that Mr. Ellbey should write at some length about Ouled Nail dancers in North Africa; for his description makes it clear that he has never seen the true dance.

Return to All This

The Real David Copperfield. By Robert Graves. Barker. 10s. 6d.

(REVIEWED BY BERNARD CAUSTON)

ROBERT GRAVES, the poet and author of the autobiography, "Goodbye to all that," has rewritten and compressed "David Copperfield," perhaps the most autobiographical of Charles Dickens' novels. As justification of this process, Graves points out in a foreword that Dickens wrote the original in instalments for serial publication in the "Old Monthly Magazine," with the result that "at least a quarter of a million words of the half-million words in 'David Copperfield' add nothing to the story."

This revised version does not stop short at compression. "... as soon as he had David Copperfield grown up and established as a successful member of the upper middle class, Dickens' honesty failed him." So Graves has made David Copperfield, the narrator, describe his own literary powers with a sophisticated detachment which presupposes a rather different Dickens:—

"I had been lucky enough to stumble on that happy compromise between the moralistic and the romantic which the taste of the day demanded, and found also that I preserved the faculty, so useful to me in my story-telling at Salem House, of agreeably diluting my plot with a sequence of supernumerary but quite plausible—in short, by mere talk. Reading a magazine was a leisurely occupation. I saw no reason why writing for a magazine should be otherwise. As I was paid by the page, and had no interest in the stories as contributions to English literature, I was able to economise considerably in creative effort, and quite enjoyed myself."

'Umble Uriah

If such passages as this are less convincing, the general result of this re-writing is one which will be of interest to all readers of Dickens save the most fanatical sticklers for "verbal inspiration." For, fortunately, this is not one of those "period-parodies" which contrive to make fun, as though on principle, of everything the Victorians held seriously. There is a sort of hollowness about such deliberately arch facetiousness. Graves, however, is content to allow the reader to share the characters' feelings, but pares away much that is superfluous on the plea that "a too free use of the pocket-handkerchief by the characters of the novel makes the modern reader unnecessarily sparing of his own." And on various episodes he throws a slightly new light. David's admiration of Steerforth is reinforced by a more realistic insight into Emily's motives for running away with him, and the relationship between Annie and Jack Maldon is not quite so effectively white-washed as in the original version. But the main ingredients remain. It is satisfactory to be able to record that there has been no tampering with the essential villainy of Uriah Heep, who is as 'umble as ever.

A useful comparison might be drawn with "Great Expectations," which is also autobiographical but is only half the length of "David Copperfield," as written by Dickens. The heroes

of both betray shame at their humble ancestry, "Pip," of the two, making the most honest avowal. David's more concealed priggishness receives no mercy from his new chronicler, who leads him to admit that the one real passion of his life—for Emily—had been sacrificed to his snobishness.

The Inner Light

Music: Its Secret influence throughout the Ages.

By Cyril Scott. Rider & Co. 7s. 6d. net.

(REVIEWED BY THE LATE ROBIN H. LEGGE)

THE title of this book by Cyril Scott ("the famous composer" as the jacket says) should be sufficient indication, he says, that it is not concerned with the technical side of music but with an aspect of that widely disseminated art hitherto unsuspected not only by the reading public but by musicians themselves. That is the negative explanation, as it were. The positive explanation is contained in the next sentence of the preface wherein the author thanks his friend "David Aurias for valuable help given me through the exercise of his remarkable faculties, and particularly for the portrait of Master Koot Hoomi which was psychically impressed upon the artist by the Master himself."

This Master Koot Hoomi seems to be a very remarkable man, and of a great age. Mr. Scott states that he graduated at Oxford as long ago as in 1850, that is 83 years ago, and now resides at Shigatze. This means that the Master must be as nearly as possible a centenarian, for there cannot be, in the natural order of things, an Oxford Examinee in the final schools of less years than 17 or thereabouts. Nevertheless it is to their aged Master that Mr. Scott states unequivocally that he is indebted for all the information regarding the hidden effects of music which he expounded in his earlier book "The Influence of Music on History and Morals," and in this, his latest contribution to the subject, "Music, its Secret influence throughout the Ages." The author is at least to this extent happier now than before, not only because the ban has been raised which prevented him before from giving this High Initiate, Master Koot Hoomi, as his authority for the light that was in him, but also because in a sense he and those who think with him are enabled to preach to a much larger audience. For, Mr. Scott writes: "During the last ten years occult ideas in one form or another have become widely disseminated, and scepticism towards the not immediately explainable or perceptible has ceased to be the fashion among the intelligentsia. Spiritualism has recruited an ever increasing number of adherents: theosophical ideas have been embraced even by non theosophists; astrology finds its place in the daily papers: reincarnation and Karma (the law of cause and effect) have been accepted as logical doctrines, while the higher types of Clairvoyance, Clairaudience, and kindred faculties are no longer treated as subjects of ridicule and pseudo-sapient negation."

Mr. Scott has set himself to take advantage of this increased audience to solve many problems of musicality, of Pure Music and Soloism—"Vocal soloism is in a sense the furthest removed from

pure music"—of inspiration and invention and so on. I think a goodly proportion even of his augmented audience will still require to remain *in statu pupillari* for a considerable time yet in order thoroughly to absorb the meaning of some of Mr. Scott's solutions. The ordinary man, for example, must ponder long upon the visit to Java of Debussy (p. 163). There seems to be no testimony to this visit at any rate in the flesh.

Mr. Scott writes Debussy "was unconsciously used by the Higher Ones to carry over Fourth Race Sound-vibrations into the Fifth." To this end he was destined to visit Java where he made a study of and absorbed the characteristics of Javanese music which is a remnant, though mellowed and modified, of the Alantean, and which, I should add, exercises a powerful influence through the astral on the physical body, especially on the Solar plexus. An obvious example of this Fourth Race music mingling with that of the Fifth is shown in "Fêtes in which ancient chants actually associated with the temples of the past subtly mingle with a whole modern and irresponsible element." I leave the reader to seek his own solution of this problem—all the better if his search is accompanied by Mr. Cyril Scott.

Just Judgment

Modern France. By Cicely Hamilton. Dent. 7s. 6d.

THERE is no end to the writing of books about France, and, what is still better, there need be no end, as Miss Hamilton's shows, to the writing of good books about our neighbours, so near and yet so mysterious to most Englishmen.

The worst criticism to be made of Miss Hamilton is that, if judged by her title, the subjects of her chapters seem a little haphazard; but she takes the sting out of it by explaining, in a thoughtful preface, that her main object is to indicate recent social changes in France and to offer explanation of the French political outlook and anxiety of to-day.

If seldom brilliant, she is competent, informing, and fair-minded. There are few mistakes, as, for instance, the suggestion that Frenchwomen still habitually wear high-heeled shoes: the fashion for these passed, rather suddenly, four or five years ago; but Miss Hamilton over-estimates what she calls "the Passing of the Peasant," for over fifty per cent. of the nation is still of the peasant-proprietor class, and closer study of the statistics would have led her to the conclusion that the French infant mortality rate is of more importance than the birth-rate to the general problem of the population.

On the subject of "the Debatable Lands," that is, the provinces for which France and Germany have battled for centuries, Miss Hamilton is good and fair. Her contention that the French are fundamentally peace-loving will be supported by all who know them, and her chapter on "the Army of To-day," its size and its significance, should dispel a number of commonplace fallacies propagated by interested parties. "Unlike her neighbours," Miss Hamilton remarks significantly,

METHUEN

(Chairman: E. V. LUCAS)

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Commerce and the Corridor

The German Paradox. By A. Plutynski. Wishart. 6s.

THIS short sketch of the dynamics of German post-war development deserves the close study of all students of Germany's relations with her Eastern neighbours. The author, a Polish economist, has presented his argument with calmness and lucidity. Basing himself on economic and vital statistics derived from official publications of the Reich, he contends that the economic plight of the eastern provinces, and in particular of East Prussia, is the inevitable consequence of Germany's agrarian policy. For years past this policy has been directed against her European purveyors of foodstuffs, despite the fact that the Reich is impotent to grow enough food for her own market, and that the countries of East Central Europe offer the most convenient market for Germany's surplus of manufactured articles.

The pretext on which the policy is ultimately based, namely, that East Prussia is menaced with annexation by Poland, is, of course, outside the sphere of economics; but there is much significance (if also a little naïvete), in the author's claim that German industry has everything to gain by a loosening of political and economic ties with East Prussia. The annual losses sustained by industry, in the form of state subsidies to a declining agriculture, and land-settlement funds for the colonization of areas which are being evacuated at a faster rate each year, can have but one conclusion—bankruptcy.

Slogan Versus Truth

The German Nationalist contention that the depopulation of the eastern borderlands is a consequence of the Polish Corridor carries more weight as a political slogan than as an economic truth. "Landflucht" and the westward emigration were well-marked phenomena before the War, and though the Polish Corridor may have accelerated the westward flow, there can be no doubt that the fundamental cause of this movement is to be found in the natural economic development of the people.

This paradox of a State policy that runs clean counter to natural tendency is too flagrant to remain long without solution.

Whatever one's sympathies in this burning question of the Corridor (and in practice human sentiments have a disconcerting validity of their own), one should be grateful to this writer for the quenching effect of incontestable figures and an argument that is nothing if not dispassionate.

If your friends find difficulty in obtaining the *Saturday Review* from their newsagents, ask them to send a postcard to The Publisher, *Saturday Review*, 18-20 York Buildings, Adelphi, W.C.2.

FILMS

BY MARK FORREST

King-Kong. Directed by Ernest B. Schoedsack and Merian C. Cooper. Coliseum.

The White Sister. Directed by Victor Fleming. Empire.

The King's Vacation. Directed by John Adolph. Regal.

MANY miracles in trick photography have already been accomplished and, doubtless, many doughty deeds are awaiting performance, but, whatever may be in store for an audience of the future, the fight between the tyrannosaurus and the brontosaurus in "King-Kong," the new picture at the Coliseum, will hold a high position, if "even the ranks of Tuscany could scarce forbear" a laugh.

The idea of this film has something in common with Conan Doyle's "Lost World"; behind a gigantic wall on an uncharted island rove the prehistoric beasts, chief among which is the huge gorilla, standing fifty feet high, with a chest that measures thirty-six feet in repose—at least, that is what my publicity matter informs me. This nest is disturbed by a film producer, played by Warwick Armstrong, who, having heard rumours of the existence of King-Kong, sets sail with a cast of actors including a girl, played by Fay Wray, to make a new version of beauty and the beast.

Unfortunately, the girl is kidnapped by the natives, who promptly present her as a sacrifice to the gorilla. Instead of eating her, however, King-Kong carries her in his hand about the jungle, much in the same way as Carnera would carry a toy Easter chicken, and to keep his prize has to struggle, not only with the brontosaurus, but with the pterodactyl and the gigantic serpent.

Her young man succeeds in rescuing her, but does the film end here? It does not. For the film producer, with the aid of a gas bomb, collars King-Kong as he comes in search of his doll, and brings him to New York. Here he breaks loose and, recapturing the girl, climbs the Empire State building where, in between admiring her, he catches the pursuing aeroplanes like flies. Eventually the machine guns finish him off and this amazing piece of hokum comes to an end. The story is rubbish, but the photography and technical ingenuity are amazing.

"The White Sister" at the Empire, in which Helen Hayes plays Lilian Gish's old part of the nun, contains the type of story which always appeals to the public. This struggle of earthly and spiritual love is well photographed, but neither Helen Hayes nor Clark Gable succeed in making me believe a word of it.

"The King's Vacation," the tale of which is so familiar that it might also be a revival, is at the Regal. George Arliss manages to get away with his head when the revolution comes, and those who are familiar with the way in which George Arliss spends a holiday in a picture will not be disappointed, except by the quips which lack freshness, and the tempo which is funereal.

CORRESPONDENCE

A Sane Suggestion

SIR,—Now that so many large country houses are being shut down and so many families are feeling the draught, may I suggest that the plan which I heard the other day would be extremely valuable?

There are many small town families who keep a maid or maids and yet can scarcely afford to give their daughters an adequate allowance, and certainly cannot afford them a training.

These smallhold families should band together, say four or five, and they, having located a large country house and garden, should proceed to turn it into a paying concern.

The women folk will be responsible for the housework, cooking and inside work, and they will be the daughters and wives of the men who will undertake the market garden. Everyone would be paid.

Each family would have its own sitting room and, when the work had been done, be quite independent if they so wished.

There are so many young women of round about 20 who, if their parents cannot give them an allowance, proceed as typists to small, dingy offices. If they could take a pride in cooking or housework and receive remuneration for so doing, surely it would be a matter of satisfaction to the parents to feel that their money was staying in the family, and surely it would be a delightful life if the house was properly run?

Sussex.

SUSAN ORCHARD.

The Cuckoo Complex

SIR,—I have heard the cuckoo. I heard him in full song, or blast, on Good Friday. But dared I tell even my nearest and dearest that I had heard this particular bird? I did not dare. If I hear a thrush sing or even a nightingale, if I hear a nightjar make noises like a rusty fishing reel in pain, if I hear a cornrake I am permitted to testify. But to hear a cuckoo is to be the subject of ribaldry or scepticism. Why? Because this odd and interesting bird has become the friend and support and stay of a popular press which can invent no new jest, however witless or dull.

Maida Vale.

G. ARMLOCK.

Force and Weakness

SIR,—Whether the series of fires in Ashdown forest are the work of a madman, a gang of lunatics, an evilly disposed person or many evilly disposed persons, the failure to discover cause and perpetrators does strike those living in other counties as amazing. Civilian efforts may be vain because they are inexperienced, ill-informed, and loosely directed. But there is a local police force.

Hants.

L. BAKER.

Legal Trickiness

SIR,—The proposal to empower High Court judges to do away with trial by jury in cases for compensation claimed by victims of road accidents against car-drivers is understood to have the enthusiastic backing of the interested insurance companies. That is likely enough. These believe, not perhaps without advice from eminent counsel that few judges will grant £500, whereas common juries freely award £2,500 in a bad smash, knowing who is behind the apparently "poor" driver defending. But in fact it is the fear of heavy damages which prevents many drivers from hogging round blind corners. No one, incidentally, seems to reflect on the difficult position of a judge trying an accident case of this type with the knowledge before him officially, now withheld from the jury, that the defendant has paid a large sum into court!

Lincoln.

S. E. POUND.

A Chance for the League

SIR,—Pray listen to a suggestion from a reader of many years' standing, about the Moscow trial.

As you say, the prospect of our boycott may have no effect on the Russians. They will simply divert their market. But if the whole of Europe were to boycott them, they might be brought to reason. If there is any use at all in the League of Nations, surely this is their

opportunity. They would not be asked to intervene in any war. The sole object of any advice they could give would be—Justice.

Ledbury.

IGNOTA.

Lunacy and the Moon

SIR,—It would appear that superstition plays a prominent part in the assumption that lunacy is connected with certain phases of the moon. At all events, superstition has much to do with the treatment of those suffering from mental illness. It is high time that an "entirely new lunacy code" were established in this country in accordance with the powerful recommendations of the Royal Commission.

FRANCIS J. WHITE,
National Society for Lunacy Law Reform. Secretary.

O Tempora . . .

SIR,—The Rugby School racquet court is probably half a yard faster than Queen's, which in turn is reckoned a yard faster than the other school courts. That is how Rugby won the Public Schools Pot, quicker acclimatisation. Simpson, Milford, Gray in twenty years are names great enough. Pulbrook of Harrow had this year extra devil: but the Rugby pair had gained in stamina and power of return. Still, Harrow have gone down to the Arnold tradition thrice now in six months, if the Halford-Hewitt golf competition be added to Queen's and Rugger.

Kensington.

O.H.

With Apologies

SIR,—Due doubtless to my maligraphy, two errors appear in my letter on "Cigarettes" in a recent issue of *The Saturday Review*. "Cigarette-smoking in the case of young people is a physical, mental and moral poison" is what I wrote, but the word "pointing" is printed in mistake for "poison." "Practise," the verb, is wrongly printed as "practice," the noun. If people will smoke cigarettes, they will be well advised if they do so through a holder. The real danger of cigarette smoking is inhalation.

J. P. BACON PHILLIPS.

THE ECONOMICS OF ABUNDANCE

A Programme of National Importance

By

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CITY.—BY OUR CITY EDITOR

Lombard Street, Thursday.

THE City has been watching the dollar intently since the holiday period and with good reason, for the sharp spurt in the sterling-dollar rate was the prelude to the announcement by President Roosevelt that the gold export embargo was to be resumed and that the dollar would be allowed to find its own level in relation to the other currencies of the world. This latest move is an unfortunate one in view of the coming World Economic Conference, and America's deliberate devaluation of the dollar is hardly likely to facilitate the solution of the already desperate War Debt problem, for Britain's debt to the United States is payable on a gold basis. Proposals have been put forward by the more panicky sections of the United States administration to introduce inflation of the American dollar by the remonetisation of silver. Though the President himself has disclaimed any such idea, there are powerful interests behind the proposals which were defeated only by a narrow margin in the Senate, and the impression prevails that the greatest pressure will be brought to bear to force some scheme for silver remonetisation upon the World Economic Conference. Consequently there has been considerable speculation in silver from the American side, and the market price appreciated sharply to 18d. per ounce. China has taken advantage of the rise to liquidate a portion of her large holdings, but there must be a considerable "bull" account which seems likely to collapse unless official action for the remonetisation of silver actually comes to pass, for there can hardly be sufficient revival of the Eastern demand to maintain the present level. There seems no reason to anticipate any support from Britain for bimetallism, which was discredited many years ago, but on the other side of the Atlantic conditions have recently reached the level when any panic-stricken measure is likely to receive support.

Gold and Markets

Meanwhile the inflow of gold into the Bank of England continues, Tuesday's entry of nearly £4,500,000 constituting almost a record for a single day's influx. The Bank has received upwards of sixty millions sterling at par of the metal since January and the total gold holding of over £180,000,000 constitutes another record, a remarkable position for the central bank of a country which is "off" the gold standard. The strength of the Bank's gold position has naturally led to considerable speculation as to when a return to the gold standard will be attempted, for such a return is generally accepted as inevitable, if not desirable. But America's latest action renders any attempt at stabilisation of the pound sterling impossible at present; for though Britain is anxious to give a lead which will help to free the many currencies fettered by exchange restrictions, the many uncertainties existing internationally preclude any immediate move with the assurance of success. Meanwhile stock markets have been remarkably cheerful for the pre-Budget period, gilt-edged keeping firm while Home Railway stocks have improved on better trade and traffic returns and prospects of

Road-Rail legislation. Industrials have kept steady and though, in the speculative sections, gold shares have reacted on the rise in sterling, there has been some inquiry for Rubber shares, the commodity having improved on the likelihood of the renewal of proposals for production restriction towards which the Dutch Government is now reported to be more favourably inclined.

The Argentine Exchange

Those interested in Argentine investments are still awaiting the outcome of the trade and exchange negotiations proceeding between Britain and Argentina. The huge volume of British investments in Argentina in railways, land companies, utility concerns, and in government and municipal bonds, makes the exchange question an important one. Three of the big four British-owned railways in the Argentine, the Buenos Aires Great Southern, the Buenos Aires Western and the Central Argentine companies, have declared it impossible to pay the dividends due on their preference stocks, though ample funds are available in Argentina, owing to the absence of facilities for remittance. The fourth big line, the Buenos Aires and Pacific, has been forced for some time to withhold almost the whole of its debenture interest. In spite of these shocks the Argentine Railway market has been firmer, the expectations in some quarters being that more funds will be released for the Anglo-Argentine companies by the suspension of sinking fund obligations on the public debt. Sir Otto Niemeyer, who recently investigated the Argentine position, reported that it was at present regrettably impossible to dispense with the exchange control, but it is to be hoped that as a result of the Anglo-Argentine negotiations the British investor in Argentine securities will receive somewhat fairer treatment than has recently been his lot.

Larger Match Profits

Bryant and May, Ltd., announce profits for the year to March 31 last of £566,706 compared with £520,038 for the previous year, and the total payments for the year on the ordinary shares, which are all held by the British Match Corporation, amount to £330,000 free of tax as in the previous year. In addition, the ordinary shares are to receive a bonus of £150,000 from non-recurring profits on sales of investments and this sum will be utilised by the directors of the British Match Corporation for strengthening that company's reserves. The allocation to reserve is £100,000, or double that of a year ago, and the balance-sheet shows cash at over £300,000, while the company has also gilt-edged securities of market value £672,126 at March 31 last. During the year the 5 per cent. debentures were converted to the extent of £500,000 into a 4 per cent. stock, the remaining £250,000 outstanding being paid-off in cash in accordance with the directors' wish to reduce the amount of the debenture indebtedness.

Apollinaris Results

Apollinaris and Presta, Ltd., the table-water manufacturers, suffered a set-back during last year as the result of shrinkage of the company's export trade owing to the effects of tariffs, exchange restrictions and the many barriers to international

trade. The actual profits were £34,879 for 1932, compared with £54,855 for 1931, and the interest and sinking fund charges require £44,288, leaving the amount carried forward lower by nearly £10,000. The company has, however, War Loan and cash totalling £55,669, and is in a position to weather the economic storm and await the return of normal trading times.

Stock Exchange Information

The Stock Exchange Official Intelligence, the only book of reference issued officially by the Stock Exchange, and edited by the Secretary of the Share and Loan Department of the "House," contains in its 1933 edition, just published, particulars of 550 companies not previously included, also particulars of 58 additional loans issued by governments and public authorities. Information is given regarding a number of concerns of interest, although their securities are not dealt in on the Stock Exchange, and features in this latest issue are notes on the Estate Duty, War Debts and Reparations, the past year's Stock Regulations regarding loans issued by local authorities, U.S. Federal Income Tax, Indian Finances, and Company Law in 1932. The "Official Intelligence" is a mine of information and is published by Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co. at 60s. net.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 31.

IN CLASSIC PHRASE, "LIGHT AS THE DRIVEN FOAM";
THIS SEEK IN FIELDS, THAT TOMMY BLOWS AT HOME.

1. "Raised" by his art, "a mortal to the skies."
2. Core of a place which Daily Wants supplies.
3. West Indian lizard: good to eat, they say.
4. Tasty though tiny, caught at Pegwell Bay.
5. From deep-toned instrument take half of two.
6. Of great Reformer just one-third will do.
7. Heart of a mountain-ridge Isaiah knew.
8. Cricket and football, this lad's pet pursuits.
9. Refuse of slaughtered swine and other brutes.
10. In me lie stored: hops, hardware, silk, soap, victuals.
11. Set up to be knocked down—the fate of skittles!

SOLUTION OF ACROSTIC No. 30.

D	u	P	e
A	r	t	i
m	i	N	
I	n	c	u
S	a	t	a
H	a	l	f
G	l	o	x
E			
c	O		
R			
G	e	y	s
E	l	o	q

The winner of Acrostic No. 29 (the first correct solution opened) was Miss Domville, to whom a book will be sent.

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Next Week's Broadcasting

"CHU Chin Chow" was not particularly exciting. True, the music seemed as fresh as ever, but the dialogue, robbed of its visual surroundings, was dull and banal. A concert performance of the music, without any attempt at dramatisation, would have been far more satisfying.

Incidentally, the frequency with which the letter "r" was inserted into and between words where it had no right to exist was quite amazing. It turned up in every syllable of "Marjanah," it was to be found, and sedulously rolled, in two syllables of "Mahbubah," it clung to Ali Baba's beard and even insinuated itself between India and Africa. This is a hateful solecism at the best of

times, but in broadcasting it is one of the seven deadly sins.

It is safe to predict that it will not be a cause for complaint in "Coriolanus" (April 26th, 9.35 p.m. National, and April 27th 8.0 p.m. Regional). The cast alone—Sybil Thorndike, Leon Quartermaine, Frank Cellier, Felix Aylmer, Irene Rooke—is sufficient guarantee for that.

The music for the production has been specially composed by Robert Chignell. Mr. Chignell's name does not often appear in the programmes, but he is actually responsible for a considerable number of the orchestral arrangements. He has an amazing facility for writing incidental music which, without unduly obtruding itself, heightens the effect of a play, and in consequence aids the producer in that most difficult task, the creation of "atmosphere."

ALAN HOWLAND.

Public Schools

ALDENHAM SCHOOL

AN Examination will be held on June 1-3 for Entrance Scholarships, varying from £90 to £40, for boys under 15 on May 1st. For particulars apply to the Headmaster, Aldenham School, Elstree.

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AN Examination will be held on June 6th and 7th for Scholarships of £60 and £30, open to boys under 14 on June 1st.—Apply The Secretary, Berkhamsted School, Herts.

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